

to dry while the tallow was stripped of the flakes. In the dry prairie atmosphere one day is usually sufficient to cure the meat without the aid of salt or smoke. When thus dried it is known as "jerked beef." While the meat is fresh, for the first day or two, the camp is the scene of constant feasting, the juicy steaks or the sweet ribs being kept broiling over the fire in one tepee or another until far into the night. It is the harvest home of the prairie tribes. As soon as the meat is dry the tepees are taken down and packed into the wagons along with the meat, and one family after another starts for home, until in a short time the great camp is a thing of the past.

The jerked beef or venison is commonly prepared for eating by being boiled until reasonably tender. In eating the Indian takes a strip thus cooked, dips one end into a soup made by dissolving some salt in warm water, takes the portion thus salted between his teeth, and saws off enough for a mouthful with a knife held in his other hand. Between mouthfuls he takes bites from a strip of dried tallow placed in the dish with the meat.

For pemmican the jerked beef or other meat is toasted over a fire until crisp, and is then pounded into a hash with a stone hammer. In the old times a hole was dug in the ground, and a buffalo hide was staked over so as to form a skin dish, into which the meat was thrown to be pounded. The hide was that from the neck of the buffalo, the toughest part of the skin, the same used for shields, and the only part which would stand the wear and tear of the hammers. In the meantime the marrow bones are split up and boiled in water until all the grease and oil come to the top, when it is skimmed off and poured over the pounded beef. As soon as the mixture cools it is sewed up into skin bags and laid away until needed. It was sometimes buried or

otherwise cached. Pemmican thus prepared will keep indefinitely. When prepared for immediate use it is usually sweetened with sugar, mesquite pods, or some wild fruit mixed and beaten up with it in the pounding. It is extremely nourishing, and has a very agreeable taste to one accustomed to it. On the march it was to the prairie Indian what parched corn was to the hunter of the timber tribes, and has been found so valuable as a condensed nutriment that it is extensively used by Arctic travelers and explorers. A similar preparation is in use upon the pampas of South America, and in the desert region of South Africa, while the canned beef of commerce is an adaption from the Indian idea. The name comes from the Cree language, and indicates something mixed with grease or fat.

LACOMBE.

#### INDIAN "GAGUTIT," OR "HUNT THE BUTTON" GAME.

This is a favorite winter game with the prairie tribes, and was probably more or less general throughout the country. It is played both by men and women, but never by the two sexes together. It is the regular game in the long winter nights, after the scattered families have abandoned their exposed summer positions on the open prairie, and moved down near one another in the shelter of the timber along the streams. When hundreds of Indians are thus camped together, the sound of the drum, the rattle, and the gaming sound, resound nightly through the air. To the stranger there is a fascination about such a camp through the night, with the conical tepees scattered about under the trees, the firelight shining from within through the white canvas, and distinctly outlining upon the cloth the figures of the occupants making merry insides with jests and story, while from a half dozen different directions comes the measured tap of